

**“THE TAOS SOCIETY OF ARTISTS” EXHIBITION BRINGS
VIBRANT, AMERICAN MASTERPIECES TO SCOTTSDALE’S MUSEUM OF THE WEST
JANUARY 10 – APRIL 30, 2017**

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Western Spirit: Scottsdale’s Museum of the West pays tribute to the Taos Society of Artists – one of the most influential schools of American painting in the nation’s history – with a major exhibition of masterpieces on display January 10 through April 30, 2017. “The Taos Society of Artists” features paintings by 19 artists, and includes more than 80 of the finest and most valued Society artworks ever exhibited together. The paintings are on loan from institutions across the country, as well as private collections.

The exhibition is co-curated by Tricia Loscher, Ph.D., chief curator of Scottsdale’s Museum of the West, and Peter Hassrick, director emeritus of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West. Scottsdale Art Auction is the exhibition sponsor.

Related Events

The museum is presenting a number of events in conjunction with the exhibition. A series of four monthly “Taos Tuesdays” programs will be held between 11 a.m. and noon in the Virginia G. Piper Theater/Auditorium. Topics include tourism and cultural heritage (January 31), collecting and the patron/artist relationship (February 14), Taos Associate Member John Sloan’s advocacy of Native American art (March 14), and a screening of “Awakening in Taos,” a documentary about Mabel Dodge Luhan and her role in making Taos a haven of inspiration and creativity for writers and artists (April 11).

“The Taos Society of Artists” Symposium, a two-day lecture series sponsored by Marcia and Hugh Ruddock, will be held from 1 to 5 p.m., Thursday, April 6 and Friday, April 7, 2017. The symposium will feature internationally recognized scholars who will discuss the society’s members, artistic technique, the birth of tourism in Taos, the topic of art patronage and the unique components that established an artistic circle in Taos, New Mexico during the early 20th century.

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Speakers and topics include Barbara Brandenburg Brenner, granddaughter of Oscar E. Berninghaus and lifetime supporter of the Taos arts community (“My Grandpa Painted Pictures”); Virginia Couse Leavitt, granddaughter of E. Irving Couse and founder of The Couse Foundation (a discussion of Eanger Irving Couse and Joseph Henry Sharp); Michael Grauer, associate director of curatorial affairs/curator of art and Western heritage at the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, and art history instructor at West Texas A&M University (“What Buck Brought to the Table: W. Herbert Dunton and the Taos Society of Artists”); Peter Hassrick, co-curator of “The Taos Society of Artists” exhibition, and director emeritus of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West (“Taos Transformations: The Art of E. Martin Hennings”); Tricia Loscher, Ph.D., co-curator of “The Taos Society of Artists” exhibition and chief curator of Western Spirit: Scottsdale’s Museum of the West (the 1924 Sands family trip to Taos, New Mexico); and Susan Sessions Rugh, Ph.D., dean of undergraduate education and history professor at Brigham Young University (“The Taos Painters and Branding the Southwest for Tourists”).

Admission to “The Taos Society of Artists” exhibition, the April 6-7 symposium, and the “Taos Tuesdays” events is included in museum admission, and is free to museum members. The museum is located in downtown Scottsdale at 3830 N. Marshall Way (one block west of Scottsdale Road at 1st Street).

About the Taos Society of Artists

The Taos Society of Artists was founded in 1915 in Taos, New Mexico by six artists, who were inspired by the area’s enchanting land and indigenous peoples. This group grew to include 12 members and seven associate members. The Society’s founding members were Oscar E. Berninghaus (1874–1952), Ernest L. Blumenschein (1874–1960), Eanger Irving Couse (1866–1936), William Herbert “Buck” Dunton (1878–1936), Bert Geer Phillips (1868–1956) and Joseph Henry Sharp (1859–1953). This group grew to include 12 members and seven associate members.

The other members included: Kenneth Adams (1897–1966), Catharine Carter Critcher (1868–1964), Ernest Martin Hennings (1886-1956), Victor Higgins (1884–1949), Julius Rolshoven (1858–1930) and Walter Ufer (1876–1936).

Associate members were: Gustave Baumann (1881–1971), Randall Davey (1887–1964), Albert Groll (1866–1952), Robert Henri (1865–1929), Bror Julius Olsson (B.J.O.) Nordfeldt (1878–1955), Birger Sandzén (1871–1954) and John Sloan (1871–1951).

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Society members were required to have worked in Taos for three consecutive years, have shown an interest and aptitude for capturing the spirit and character of Native Americans in their paintings, and have shown work in reputable galleries or New York salons. The artists also shared a European academic artistic training.

These artists not only created a distinctive style of American art, but also played a key role in transforming the remote Taos community into an international art center, with the Society artists enjoying a large measure of celebrity. Artists, photographers, scientists, business leaders, members of high society and even families on vacation traveled to Taos to see with their own eyes the wonderland portrayed in the paintings, meet the local artists and purchase artworks first-hand.

The Society also arranged traveling exhibitions to New York City, St. Louis, Chicago and other cities, which led to solo gallery exhibitions for some of the artists.

The older members of the Taos Society aligned more closely to their academic training, while the younger members broke new ground experimenting with modernist techniques coming from European artists such as Picasso, Cezanne and Matisse. The Society's resulting American masterpieces feature vivid images of dramatic landscapes and Native Americans in traditional clothing, which shaped popular cultures' perceptions of the American Southwest and influenced generations of artists, including Georgia O'Keefe, Andrew Dasburg, Marsden Hartley and Maynard Dixon.

The Society officially disbanded in 1927 due to faltering economic conditions leading up to the Great Depression of the 1930s, and some tensions among the Society's members who, by then, were well-known and in demand for solo exhibitions.

For more information about the exhibition and related events, call 480-686-9539 or visit scottsdalemuseumwest.org.

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**Exhibition: "The Taos Society of Artists"
Sponsored by Scottsdale Art Auction**

Dates: January 10, 2017 through April 30, 2017

Location: Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West, 3830 N. Marshall Way, Scottsdale, AZ 85251

Price: Included with museum admission: \$13, adults; \$11, seniors (65+) and active military; \$8, students (full-time with ID) and children (6-17 years); and free to museum members and children 5 and under.

Info: (480) 686-9539

Website: www.scottsdalemuseumwest.org

Museum Hours:

Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat.: 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Thursday: 9:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Sunday: 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Closed Monday

**"Taos Tuesdays" Programs
Included with museum admission; free to members**

Tuesday, January 31, 2017 | 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Taos Tuesdays

Three Myths of Cultural Heritage: Tourism Perspectives

Arizona State University Professor Dallen J. Timothy, Ph.D. examines the complex and evolving relationship of tourism industry perceptions of cultural heritage.

Tuesday, February 14, 2017 | 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Taos Tuesdays

The Patron/Artist Relationship and the Art of Collecting

Collectors played an important role in the promotion and support of members of the Taos Society of Artists. Leading American art dealers Brad Richardson (Legacy Gallery) and Jack A. Morris Jr. (Morris & Whiteside Galleries) examine this connection and the cultivation of a new generation of collectors.

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Tuesday, March 14, 2017 | 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Taos Tuesdays

John Sloan and the Promotion of Native American Art

Diana Pardue, curator of collections for the Heard Museum, discusses Taos Associate Member John Sloan, and his advocacy of Native American art.

Tuesday, April 11, 2017 | 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Taos Tuesdays

“Awakening in Taos” Documentary Screening

This stunning film reveals the personal evolution of a woman 100 years ahead of her time. Mabel Dodge Luhan was a writer and advocate for the arts, women’s rights and Native American culture, whose Taos home became a haven of inspiration and creativity for esteemed writers and artists.

About the Museum

Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West features regularly changing exhibits of Western art and artifacts, entertaining events, and informative programs that bring our Western heritage to life. The museum became a Smithsonian Affiliate in 2015, and has been named “Best Western Museum” in the nation for two consecutive years (True West magazine’s 2016 and 2017 “Best of the West” annual listings). It is owned by the City of Scottsdale and managed by Scottsdale Museum of the West, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Community leader and businessman Jim Bruner is its board chairman. Michael Fox is its director/CEO. The nonprofit relies upon private support to fund the museum’s operation. For more information about the museum, visit scottsdalemuseumwest.org.

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